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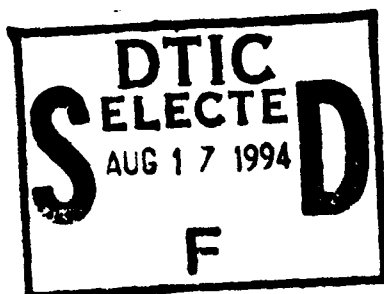


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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
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ANOTHER CRISIS! CAN WE COUNT ON THE RESERVES?



by

GARY A. CORBETT
LtCol, U.S. Air Force

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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ABSTRACT

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This paper examines these problems in light of the new post Cold War environment and a shrinking force structure. In examining the methods of accessing Reserve Component forces, a critical void is uncovered between the politically sensitive involuntary activation and the uncertainty of volunteerism. A series of new policies, planning concepts, and legislative changes are molded together to plug this gap by forming a program which will provide the regional CINC with timely, reliable and more accessible Reserve Component forces.

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ANOTHER CRISIS! CAN WE COUNT ON THE RESERVES?

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In an international crisis, a regional Commander-in-Chief (CINC) may very well need the capabilities of the Reserve Components (RC). The good news is that the Total Force is alive and well: RC forces have proven themselves both competent and ready in recent Operations such as Desert Storm and Restore Hope. However, the bad news is that the accessibility of these forces to the regional CINC is a gray area that has resulted in shortcomings in both the planning and execution of contingency operations for the U.S. military.

This paper will attempt to highlight these deficiencies and propose more timely and reliable ways to access RC forces for contingency operations. While this paper will concentrate on improving access for Air Reserve Component (ARC) forces from the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, the principles apply in cases where a supported CINC needs access to RC forces from other services as well. First, background information will show: 1) the increasing importance of the RC in the post Cold War, and 2) the methods of accessing reserve forces. Next, the limitations of the regional CINC in accessing RC forces will be shown using historical examples as evidence. Solutions will then be identified in order to improve both responsiveness and more effective resourcing options in support of the combatant commander's crisis requirements.

CHAPTER II

THE ROLE OF RESERVE FORCES IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER

The role of Reserve Component forces has been altered substantially due to dramatic changes in both the international environment as well as consequential changes to the U.S. military force structure.

The Changing World - During the Cold War, accessibility of Reserve Component forces was not an issue. RC forces were designed to expand U.S. active duty forces and help defeat a global threat from the Soviet Union.¹ In planning for World War III (a general war with the Soviet Union, triggered by a Warsaw Pact attack on NATO), military planning envisioned a quick political decision to transition to full U.S. mobilization.²

Today, world trends are pointing toward an accelerating need for the rapid projection of security and civil infrastructures of all kinds (transport, communications, surveillance, rescue, medical, humanitarian assistance, civil emergency, and security), particularly into the less developed world for situations short of full combat operations.³ So with the new dangers of the post Cold War era, operational planning spans a wider spectrum of needs: extending beyond wartime contingencies to domestic emergencies and peacetime operations.⁴

A Changing Total Force - General Creighton Abrams, Chief of Staff of the US Army, had supported the Total Force Concept after the Vietnam conflict so that never again should the United

States enter a major, prolonged military conflict without the reserves.⁵ The reason was simple: with the reserves involved, the Congress and, even more importantly, the American public would have to support the involvement. The Total Force Policy was defined as follows: "It is DOD policy to place maximum reliance on Guard and Reserve units and manpower. We use active units and manpower to support scheduled overseas deployment or sea duty, training requirements, and to support the rotation base. Above that level, we plan to support military contingencies with Guard and Reserve units and manpower when they can be available within planned deployment schedules on a cost effective basis."⁶

However, total U.S. military strength has shrunk dramatically. Air Force budgets have fallen by forty-four percent from the peak forces of the mid-1980's.⁷ The restructuring of the U.S. military means an even greater reliance will be placed on the reserves in the future. The RC share of the Total Force is particularly noteworthy in the following missions: Civil Affairs - 97%; PSYOP - 75%; Special Forces - 40%; Aerial Refueling - 50% KC135, 43% KC10; Theater Airlift - 79%; Strategic Airlift - 56% of the crews; SOF flying units - 50%; and Weather and Tactical Reconnaissance - 100%.⁸

Impact on the Reserve Components - Thus, the downsizing of the military is leaving the active duty Air Force heavily dependent on RC support. The leaner active forces no longer have an abundance of additional capacity to easily respond to multiple

contingencies. And the reserves are being asked to contribute in a myriad of roles well beyond that of expansion forces against a global Soviet threat.

It is in the areas of Peacetime Operations and Lesser Regional Contingencies that the potential lack of accessibility to RC forces becomes a more significant problem to the operational commander. Deborah Lee, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, has said that peace enforcement, peacekeeping and humanitarian operations will stress the capabilities of U.S. forces in the future. Thus, the FY 1994 Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) anticipates a larger role for Reserve forces in support of such operations.⁹

As DOD becomes more reliant upon the contributions of the Reserve Components, assuring reliable, timely and flexible access to Guard and Reserve forces takes on increasing importance.¹⁰ Before beginning to address the needs for improved access, a brief review of the current methods for accessing reserve forces and a review of historical lessons is appropriate.

CHAPTER III

METHODS OF ACCESSING RESERVE FORCES

The current laws and policies governing access to the Reserve Component were put into place during the Cold War.¹¹ A regional Commander-in-Chief (CINC), who is responding to a contingency and facing a shortfall of active duty forces which the RC could fill, would have two basic choices: request either involuntary activation or volunteerism. In order to involuntarily activate RC forces, one of three options are used. Under 10 USC 672(a) (US Code (USC), Title 10, subparagraph 672a), Congress could declare war and full mobilization could occur with no limits on personnel for a duration extending six months beyond the end of the war. Under 10 USC 673, the President could declare a national emergency and partial mobilization could occur with a maximum of one million ready reservists for a two year duration.¹²

In 1973, the two options above were deemed inadequate in responding to the massive emergency military airlift operation which supported Israeli forces during the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Senate Armed Services recognized the reluctance to use existing statutes (which required the declaration of a national emergency or war) and developed an option for a discrete and selective mobilization capability tailored to meet the requirements of particular situations. So in 1976, Congress passed 10 USC 673(b) to provide needed flexibility for

contingency operations in situations short of a national emergency.¹³ The President, under 10 USC 673(b), can initiate a Presidential Selected Reserve Call-Up (PSRC) of up to 200,000 reservists for a maximum duration of 90 days with a 90 day extension if needed. Although the President is required to notify Congress within 24 hours, the reservists can be used to augment active forces for any operational mission and without the declaration of a national emergency.¹⁴

Another option to access Reserve Component forces is under 10 USC 672(d) (Reserve Component Volunteers). Under this statute, an unlimited number of volunteers can be activated with the consent of the individual (and the State Governor for members of the National Guard).¹⁵ However, the number of volunteers that will be activated may be situation dependent and will take valuable time to make happen.

CHAPTER IV

HISTORICAL LESSONS

History provides us with several meaningful lessons on the effectiveness of accessing reserve forces using current statutes, policies and practices. A quick review of operations such as Just Cause, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and Restore Hope will help to highlight the major limitations and important issues that must be addressed in order for the regional CINCs to better access RC forces.

Operation Just Cause - Operation Promote Liberty was the post-Just Cause phase of the Panamanian intervention of 1989 which addressed the restoration of the Panamanian government and government services. During the planning for this phase of the operation, it was identified that either an activation of US Army Reserve Civil Affairs units or a concept for rotating key personnel called ARCVs (standing for Augmentation Reserve Component Volunteers) would provide the most optimum solutions for resourcing the Civil-Military Operations Task Force. But, in executing Promote Liberty, the refusal to enact Reserve call-up authority or even permit a flexible ARCV option resulted in serious costs in operation capability when only 3 out of 25 original volunteers for 31 day tours were able to respond to the more demanding 139 day tour. These events clearly demonstrated that, even with the creation of 10 USC 673(b) enabling a Presidential Selective Reserve Call-Up, the politics of a

Presidential Call-Up were still too sensitive. Furthermore, the lack of flexibility of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to permit a more reasonable rotational scheme most likely resulted in a net loss in effectiveness.¹⁶

Operation Desert Shield / Desert Storm - To many, Operation Desert Storm proved that the Total Force Policy had worked: the Reserve Components had provided cost-efficient, ready and able forces that performed extremely well. Almost 50,000 Air Force reservists were eventually activated including three air RC combat squadrons (two F-16 units and one A-10 unit).¹⁷ Once activated, the reserve flying units mobilized in 24 hours or less, and were ready to deploy in less than 72 hours.¹⁸ All units performed with distinction and with no post-mobilization validation or additional training required.¹⁹

Although the activations were successful, Desert Shield / Storm also highlighted some areas for concern. First of all, the mobilization process was not as envisioned in mobilization planning. Instead it was rather slow to materialize, and it occurred in several pieces and with a fair amount of improvisation.²⁰ Although Iraq had invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1990, initial activations (under Presidential Selective Reserve Call-up) did not occur until August 22, 1990, and it was not until January 17, 1991 that critical Individual Ready Reservists were activated under the broader authority of 10 USC 673 (partial mobilization).²¹ In a different crisis, could we afford to wait 20 days until any call-up and over 5 months until

Individual Ready Reservists are activated?

Without call-up authority, the Air Force relied heavily on volunteers at the beginning of the crisis. In August of 1990, 42 percent of strategic airlift missions and 33 percent of aerial refueling missions were flown by RC volunteers.²² While it is a great tribute to the spirit of volunteerism that the mission was accomplished the actual process of soliciting volunteers highlighted serious weaknesses in our mobilization planning and execution. Assembling volunteers was a haphazard and time consuming process at best; one which required much discussion between units, reserve headquarters, gaining commands, and the prospective volunteers themselves.²³ Typically, this process would take several days in order to build just the first rotation. Furthermore, special tailoring was required to deploy packages of equipment and personnel smaller than the Unit Type Codes (UTCs) that were packaged by Air Force war planners for a full squadron deployment.²⁴

Operation Restore Hope - In Operation Restore Hope, once again, the volunteerism of the ARC forces was instrumental in effectively accomplishing the mission. But once again, weaknesses were highlighted in the planning process. Units had to be polled for volunteers which required the valuable time and attention of planners at all levels. And once commitments were made, there was no plan off the shelf for assembling the smaller than unit packages of equipment and personnel that were required.²⁵

CHAPTER V

THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM:

Historical limitations and future expectations on the role of the RC demand that we find a more responsive, reliable, flexible, and effective system for the regional CINCs to access reserve forces. In order to improve access, the root causes of the problem must first be addressed. These include: 1) unrealistic planning assumptions regarding involuntary activation; 2) inadequate planning for reserve volunteers; 3) inadequate planning for deploying smaller than unit-size packages; and 4) a mindset that prevents the flexible integration of the reserves in support of these operations.

Unrealistic Planning Assumptions - In spite of the 1994 Defense Planning Guidance (which anticipates a larger role for RC forces in support of operations such as peacekeeping), planning at both the regional CINC, MAJCOM, and unit levels remains unrealistic in all situations short of an escalating scenario build-up to a major war. In the deliberate planning process, USAF planners, who contemplate contingency scenarios requiring the use of ARC forces, are taught to rely almost entirely on reserve call-up authority. They build OPLANS (Operation Plans) and contingency plans with an underlying assumption that entire units will readily be activated when needed.²⁶

However, involuntary Presidential call-up of the RC has traditionally proven to be too politically sensitive.

Historical experiences have shown repeatedly that involuntary activation has generally not been available, nor is it likely to be available for most future contingencies.²⁷ The reality is that a substantial political and bureaucratic threshold must be crossed to involuntarily access the RC in a peacetime operation.²⁸ And, even when conditions are ripe for call-up as we saw in Desert Shield, it took almost three weeks to happen. Thus, improvements must deal with more realistic planning assumptions, ways to desensitize the politics, and possible legislative actions to ensure reliable access.

Inadequate Planning for Reserve Volunteers - Furthermore, when call-up is not available, there is very little in the way of planning for accessing the reserves on a volunteer basis. Although RC volunteerism has done an excellent job in meeting contingencies and has traditionally exceeded expectations, the fact remains that getting volunteers is a time consuming process and is not something that planners want to count on.

Soliciting volunteers is a cumbersome and somewhat haphazard process which typically requires days, and sometimes weeks, of phone calls and meetings. It is no surprise that given this scenario, DOD planners are naturally reluctant to assume reliance on Reserve Component volunteers.²⁹ To them the "marshmallow" of volunteerism is something that is too soft of a concept to be counted upon. It only makes sense to develop a more well-defined process for accessing needed reservists at a time when our National Security interests are at stake.

Inadequate Planning for Deploying Small Packages - In peacetime operations and other Lesser Regional Contingencies, it is not unusual to need only a portion of a unit's capability. To activate an entire RC unit for smaller contingencies would probably not be politically acceptable. And to expect an entire unit of reservists to volunteer is not realistic as they have to balance participation as a reservist with other factors such as employers and customers. In responding to a request for a typical volunteer operation, a unit might contribute only 10-25% of its resources for a short duration.

Unfortunately, the mobility system does not have any packages built for these contingencies. Deployment planning at all levels is typically based on the move of an entire unit (a squadron-size UTC in a flying unit). Then, at the time of the crisis, the unit must assemble personnel, equipment and resources to deploy a much smaller package. And the lack of any preplanning complicates communications throughout the chain of command by leaving too much to be defined when time is of the essence. How does the regional CINC even know exactly what is coming his way when a three aircraft package is deploying to his theater?

Changing the Mindset - Regional CINCs and planners at all levels must adopt a "new think" mentality concerning the use of reserves to support CINC OPLANs in the areas of Peacetime Operations and Lesser Regional Contingencies.³⁰ In adopting this new mindset, they must accept the fact that RC forces will

be an integral resource for numerous contingencies below the Major Regional Contingency level. In order to effectively use reserve resources, active duty planners and commanders must understand their limitations and constraints.

Flexible options should be developed for accessing RC forces under various criteria such as: 1) either involuntary activation or volunteerism, 2) for smaller than unit size packages (possibly combining multiple units), and 3) flexible deployment durations. For warfighting disciplines deploying into an active combat environment, it may make sense to deploy the entire unit for a relatively long duration. However, for support functions or warfighters deploying in a peacetime role, it is advantageous to define resource size and duration requirements very flexibly for reservists. That way, the reservists can improve volunteer participation by allowing rotational schemes which will not place undue demands on the reservist with respect to employers or customers. A 31 day tour is optimum because it minimizes employer impact (after all it is only two weeks longer than annual active duty training requirements for reservists) while providing some level of continuity for the CINC and improved benefits for reservists. However, if the mission permits, the CINC should allow tours to be defined for 15 day durations to improve volunteer participation.

Realistic plans for accessing reservists must be built in partnership with reserve headquarters and individual RC units.

In order to effectively execute deployments of this nature, it is essential that the planning, logistics and command and control elements of the various options be exercised on a routine basis. The old adage of "train like you'll fight" applies for the deployment of RC volunteers for peacetime contingencies.

The changes in mindset and planning should institutionalize the way we access RC forces on either a voluntary or involuntary basis. The results will be improved reliability, flexibility, responsiveness, and effectiveness of RC forces to the regional CINC. Furthermore, the improved access to RC forces should help to prevent overtaxing the leaner active duty force.

CHAPTER VI

A PROGRAM TO PLUG THE GAPS

"Plan better and change the mindset" is somewhat like "apple pie and motherhood": hard to argue with, but what does it really mean? The Pre-Vol Program (for Preconsent Volunteers) is a hypothetical approach for employing these concepts in order to support a regional CINC from a typical air reserve flying squadron.

The appropriate utilization of Reserve Component forces requires much balance and interaction. It is essential that RC forces are not overused for fairly routine overseas deployments or where sufficient active duty forces exist to accomplish the mission. Involuntary activation of Guard and Reserve personnel for any mission is a sensitive matter which has the potential to disrupt the live of reservists, their families, and their employers or customers.³¹ Numerous deployments (well beyond normal training participation) would put an undue demand on reservists with respect to their civilian careers. When the situation permits, a more deliberate process should be used by planners so as to minimize employer conflicts. However, when emergencies arise and RC forces are needed immediately, it is essential that plans exist on the shelf for a wide range of options to access reservists. The Pre-Vol program would consist of the following vital building blocks: 1) established thresholds for implementation, 2) requirement options in terms

of numbers of aircraft, personnel, command and support elements, duration, and rotational capabilities, 3) partial unit deployment packages, 4) unit volunteer preconsent agreements, 5) readiness reporting, and 6) legislative changes for involuntary activation.

The Pre-Vol Program would work as follows. As a first test, Air Force planners at all levels must ensure that appropriate thresholds are crossed concerning availability of active duty forces before reservists are asked to honor prior volunteer commitments in accordance with the Pre-Vol program. However, once these thresholds are crossed, then plans will be on the shelf for quickly accessing a portion of the Reserve Component force that had preconsented to volunteer for crises of this nature.

The regional CINC would build OPLANS for various contingencies in the deliberate planning process. However, he would also build options for utilizing RC forces in the event that active forces were unavailable or might be limited. Rather than call for entire RC units or nothing, planners at the unified commands should request critical resources with the following requirement specifications defined: 1) exact number of aircraft and crews, 2) durations and capability to perform short (15 day) rotations, and 3) command and support requirements. By permitting shorter rotations, the CINC will find that the Reservists will be more capable of providing continuing, significant levels of support at greater distances and for

longer periods than most Air Force commanders might imagine.³²

At the unit level, partial unit deployment packages must be built. For a ten aircraft squadron, packages might be built for one, two, and three aircraft deployments to supplement the existing squadron level UTC built on a ten aircraft unit deployment. These packages would include personnel, equipment, and other resources required for deployment along with a separate command element package if needed to support a rainbow coalition squadron. Rainbow coalitions use one unit as the core to provide leadership, equipment, and support functions. Typically, these rainbow coalition squadrons would be commanded by a reservist if the preponderance of the assets are reserve aircraft and aircrews.

Unit volunteer preconsent agreements would be solicited from unit members to ascertain what percentage of the unit would be willing to automatically accept emergency tasking to deploy, within 48 hours, up to approximately 25% of unit equipped aircraft for at least 31 days. (For National Guard forces, Governor preconsent should also be obtained.) The unit would report via their normal readiness reports as to their volunteer capabilities against one, two or three aircraft packages. That way, MAJCOM's know instantly what tasking capability each unit can accept without any polling or without requiring discussion on the myriad of details that would comprise the small package.

The supported CINC and the command planners must realize two key factors apply when they plan for Reserve Component

volunteers: 1) they will get them for a pre-defined period (typically 31 days to provide adequate benefit protection) with subsequent 31 day rotations anticipated, and 2) several reserve units may form a rainbow coalition to form one functioning squadron. Although the active duty mindset may strongly object to 31 day tours, they will learn to appreciate that this concept will enable them to quickly get things going in the right direction. If the situation dictates, the President will then have time to activate more forces under a Presidential Selective Reserve Call-up. If not, follow-on volunteer rotations, along with some individuals extending their tours, will likely support their operations for several months.

Legislation allowing the Secretary of Defense to involuntarily activate a limited number of RC forces (providing that they had preconsented as volunteers) will ensure that the Pre-Vol Program will not just be a hollow entity. Note that this legislation will require a change to Air Force mobilization guidelines which require a tour of not less than 90 days for all involuntary activations.³³ Since it would be difficult to argue with the activation of personnel who had already volunteered, the involuntary activation decision would be desensitized politically. Furthermore, it is extremely doubtful that involuntary activations would ever be required for those who had preconsented as volunteers. The legislation exists primarily to assure planners that the program is 100% reliable.

The whole point of these actions is to institutionalize the

planning for volunteers so that RC forces are accessible when needed. Planners can rely on it, and reserve units will be better prepared when asked to provide resources for a crisis. However, it will require a change in mindset. CINC's need to honestly evaluate those situations where rotations and rainbow coalitions are compatible with mission accomplishment. The CINC will gain improved accessibility to Reserve forces and responsiveness will be improved dramatically. Furthermore, even if the Pre-Vol Program is not used to access reservists and the situation allows time for other volunteer arrangements, the packages will be on the shelf to modify for whatever contingency arises.

Once created, the Pre-Vol program must be exercised. CINC's can exercise the program in command post exercises or while Reserve units are deployed via combined training exercises and other real life contingencies. Units can utilize the deployment packages on routine deployments or when volunteers are solicited outside of the Pre-Vol program.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The active force is shrinking, international crises are requiring more U.S. military involvement, and the reliance on the Reserve Components is increasing. In this environment, a unified CINC of one of the regional commands will find it necessary to rethink how to access RC forces in order to improve both their responsiveness as well as effectively meet the resourcing requirements of a particular crisis.

Historical experiences have shown that assumptions regarding call-up authority are usually unrealistic. Involuntary activation has proven to be a hollow concept in practice, and planners are reluctant to count on the "marshmallow" of volunteerism for crisis situations. Volunteerism has been a time-consuming and haphazard process. As Deborah Lee recently said, "It is not surprising that significant changes are needed to be sure that our forces can respond to the new dangers in the post Cold War world."³⁴

The Pre-Vol program offers a needed bridge to fill the planning gap between activation through PSRC under 10 USC 673(b) (which is too slow, politically sensitive and lacks flexibility) and Volunteerism under 10 USC 672(d) (which is too slow and lacks surety). While it only provides very limited access to the RC, the Pre-Vol program does get the ball rolling by providing critical resources to the warfighting CINCs in a

timely manner. Subsequent resourcing actions may very well need to follow this interim program.

A program like the Pre-Vol program needs to be institutionalized in the way we plan, train, and deploy are forces. The planning concepts and change of mindset should result in the following improvements in accessing Reserve Component forces for the regional CINC: 1) improved reliability, 2) improved responsiveness, 3) improved economy of force for the active duty forces, 4) more effective deployment of smaller packages, 5) more realistic training and experience for Reserve forces, 6) further enhancement of the Total Force, and ultimately 7) improved mission success.

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